

From the Clinton to E. by Secretary of State  
1(a) below is practically same  
as my "talking paper."

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July 12, 1961

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Briefing for Thursday NSC Meeting

The paper to be discussed at this meeting is attached. The President may wish to lead the discussion through the ten point memorandum on "Imminent Decisions" at the start of the paper. An item-by-item commentary on this memorandum follows. The items which will call for particular emphasis or decision at the NSC meeting are marked by an asterisk: (1, 2, 5)

- ①. Military Preparations. The DOD Annex to the paper outlines a program of early large-scale preparations so as to be able to resort to a substantial use of ground force as soon as our access to Berlin is blocked.

The arguments pro and con this course are summarized in paragraph 1 of the paper on "Imminent Decisions". There is one additional consideration, which is not mentioned there: The unavailability of having large numbers of reservists and National Guardsmen standing around the Federal Service, waiting for blocking of our access -- which the East Germans might well postpone for a considerable period after signing of a peace treaty.

As a basis for his decision about military preparations the President might wish to have the Defense and State Departments prepare and study the effects of an alternative and more modest package, which he could compare with the proposals in this paper, and which would have two main components:

Paper

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On the basis of DOD and State's preparation and evaluation of this alternative package, the President could reach a decision about (i) the general level and timing of military preparations; (ii) what additional funds, if any, to request for the DOD budget before it has been acted on by the Senate Defense Appropriations Committee.

The President may also wish at the NSC meeting to emphasize the need for military preparations which would enable the US to exert continuing and flexible control over nuclear weapons during a Berlin crisis:

*Continued  
Duty*  
First, steps to strengthen US physical custody of nuclear warheads in Europe and SACEUR command and communication facilities, so as to ensure that nuclear weapons would only be used with proper authority -- even during the confusion and violence which would be attendant on substantial fighting in Central Europe.

*Kayser's  
point*  
Second.



\*2. Permanent Increase in DOD Budget. It would be useful to convince the Soviets that a Berlin crisis would lead to a permanent increase in the DOD budget, such as followed the Korean war.

Planning for such a long-term increase would not be primarily designed to affect our capability for early fighting over Berlin, but rather to deter the Soviets, who will not relish the prospect of a lasting quantum jump in U.S. defense spending. The ostensible purpose of such planning would be to prepare for a long period of stepped-up worldwide Bloc pressures, which any violent Soviet action against Berlin would presumably portend.

No opposition to this course of action has surfaced during inter-agency discussions. It tends, however, to become confused with -- and submerged by -- proposals for early large-scale military preparations designed to enhance our capability for fighting over Berlin.

The Secretary of Defense is studying the possibility of a lasting post-Berlin increase in the DOD budget. The President may wish to ask how this planning is coming, and to ask for State and DOD views as to how it might be brought to the Soviets' attention.

3. Covert Actions. The recommendation in this paper that planning for such actions be approved, subject to the Secretary of State's decisions about scale and timing, seems sound.

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4. Defense Mobilization and Civil Defense. The OGDMD submission is not an adequate basis for Presidential decisions. It will need to be remanded to the DOD for further review.
5. Economic Counter-Measures. State believes that no new decisions are required. Treasury seems to feel that the State paper is not sufficiently vigorous. The President may wish at the NSC meeting to ask Treasury for its views, so that this disagreement can be surfaced.
6. U.S. Economic Dislocations. Decisions on this subject will need to be postponed until after Presidential decisions about military preparations.
7. Public Information. While the paper is correct in saying that the only decision needed is about an early Presidential speech, Presidential encouragement would probably be helpful in getting State and USIA to proceed urgently with the large scale information program projected in this report.
8. Negotiations. While no early decision is needed, the Secretary of State expects to present some of his preliminary views on this question.
9. Western Attitude Toward East German Personnel Along the Access Routes. The staff work is finished and an early decision is required. The President may wish to ask the Secretary of State to present the arguments pro and con our accepting East German "paper stamping", which is what is basically at stake.
10. Other Issues.
  - (a) UN. The President may wish to direct State to proceed urgently with studies of the timing and manner of possible UN involvement.
  - (b) Congressional Consultation. No planning for Berlin consultation with the Congress now seems underway in the Departments concerned. It might be helpful if the President made clear that primary responsibility for such planning lies with the Secretary of State, whom he expects to take the lead and to recommend any action by the President and other Cabinet officers which he believes desirable.
11. Constructive Action. This completes the commentary on the NSC paper. That paper does not deal with the possibility of exploiting a Berlin crisis to advance our constructive purposes (as the 1947 crisis led to the

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Marshall Plan and as the Korean war was used to revitalize NATO). The President may wish to ask the Secretary of State to organize a special study of how:

(a) The felt need for greater interdependence which is likely to be triggered by a Berlin crisis might be used to register advances toward greater Atlantic cohesion -- in the political, economic, and military fields -- which would not otherwise seem feasible.

(v) The greater awareness of the dangers of the existing situation which is likely to be one result of a Berlin crisis could be exploited, in its aftermath, to try to achieve political and disarmament agreements which our allies and the USSR would not otherwise find acceptable.

It would be useful if we could come out of a Berlin crisis with something more than a defensive win to show for the tremendous effort which we will have devoted to this subject.

12. SNIE. A Special Intelligence Estimate has been prepared in anticipation of this meeting. The final pages (18-25) on probable Soviet actions are particularly worth reading. *(We have it if you want to look it over)*

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